

CHANDAMAMA

FEBRUARY 1979

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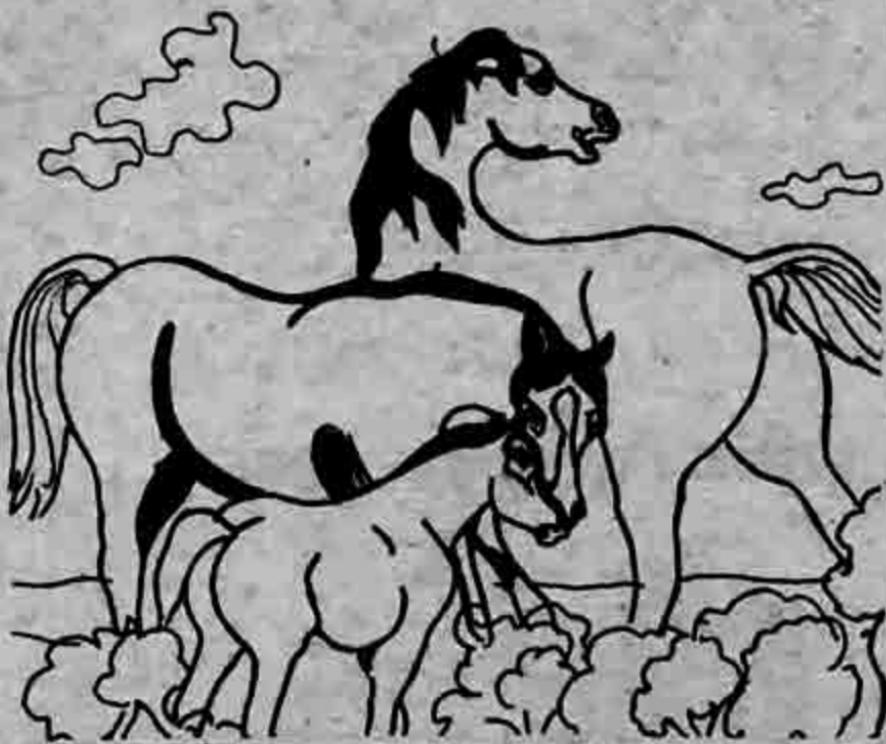
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ENJOY IN THIS ISSUE

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PLUS NINE COMPLETE STORIES
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GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

समाधारणं करे यत्ता दुर्जनः किं करिष्यति ।

अनुभे पतितो वर्त्तुः स्वयमेवोपासन्यति ॥

*Kṣamāśastram kare yarya durjanaḥ kim karifyati
Atrye patito vahnīḥ svayamevopāsanyati*

What harm can the wicked do to one who is armed with the virtue of forbearance? The wicked motive withers away just as fire falling on a place where there are no straws extinguishes of its own.

— Subhasitaratnabhandagaram

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CHANDAMAMA

Vol. 9

FEBRUARY 1979

No. 8

Founder : CHAKRAPANI

THE SAGA OF SHIVA

In the heritage of Indian Literature, after the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Epics (the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*), come the *Puranas*. There are 36 of them in all. The first *Purana* is believed to have been written by the great seer, Vyasa.

The incidents depicted in the *Puranas* are often symbolic. One must delve deep into the spirit of the scriptures if one aspires to appreciate them properly. What might often seem to be only imaginary tales to a casual reader, might seem highly meaningful to another, reader who is a seeker.

Lord Shiva has a unique place in the mystic, religious and the cultural traditions of this country. He has been the source of inspiration for many works of literature. So many festivals are associated with Shiva. Beginning with this issue we serialise an account of this great God, culled from the *Shiva Purana* and other sources. In future, if you try to know the significance of Shiva, your acquaintance with this narration would surely help you.





LET US KNOW

The Buddha is the apostle of non-violence. Yet how are many Buddhists non-vegetarians? How did Buddha himself eat meat which caused him ailments resulting in his death? Is this not a paradox?

S. L. N. Murthy, Bhilainagar, M. P.

Non-violence and compassion for all creatures are certainly among the basic principles of Buddhism and an ideal Buddhist ought to be a vegetarian. However, there are areas in the world where Buddhism as an ideal was accepted, but purely physical factors like non-availability of sufficient vegetarian food obliged the people to continue with their old food habits.

Generally speaking, such is the unfortunate condition with man that there is always a gap between the ideal in which he believes and his capacity to practise it. This holds good in regard to almost all ideals. But this should not discourage us from following ideals. In his struggle to realise an ideal, despite his failings, lies the superiority of man over other creatures.

However, it is important to remember that the Buddha was concerned about violence as a passion in man. He wanted man to master this passion, not to become its slave. Those who eat meat, though they are technically violating the Buddhist principle, cannot be accused of exercising any passion of violence in this particular action of theirs, namely, eating the non-vegetarian food.

The Buddha had given a code of conduct for the average man. But he was himself not bound by it, for he was a liberated soul. His eating meat at the house of a disciple who had nothing else to offer him was an example of his compassion. To refuse to eat the meat in that situation would have amounted to moral violence against the disciple's love and devotion. Hence there is no paradox in the Buddha's conduct.

(Readers are requested not to send new questions for a few months. Let your magazine finish answering at least a part of the backlog of questions.)





SIMPLE WHEN SOLVED

This happened long ago. Nandini, the beautiful princess of Yadupur, attracted many proposals for her marriage. Her father was at a fix. His domain was small; his army was weak. His land had powerful neighbours. The princes of all the neighbouring kingdoms desired the hand of Nandini in marriage.

"I should be happy with my daughter and proud of her. But she proves to be the cause of my anxiety!" murmured the king before the queen.

And this the princess overheard. She appeared before the king and said, "Father! I shall put my suitors to a test. Whoever emerges successful wins my hand. There will be no question of your choosing one and rejecting the rest. Hence nobody would have any reason to bear any grudge against you!"

The king agreed.

The king's messengers ran to different kingdoms in order to invite the eligible princes to the test. A good number of them gathered at Yadupur on the day prior to the appointed day. Sons of the noblemen of the court of Yadupur too were given a chance to try their luck.

The hour for the test struck. On behalf of the princess it was the aged minister who conducted the business. At his direction servants arranged three metal caskets in a row. The minister addressed the princes and said, "These three caskets bear three inscriptions on their lids: gold, silver, and brass. They also contain gold coins, silver coins, and brass coins. But the problem is, their inscriptions and their contents are not the same. Now, you can open

any one casket and pick up a coin from it. After looking at it, you must instantly speak out which casket contains which kind of coins. But it should not be a mere guess work. You should explain how you came to be sure of the contents of the caskets. Whoever can do it first wins the princess."

The princes looked pensive. They thought, "One can be sure of the content of the casket from which one picks up a coin. But how can one be sure of the contents of the other two? Even if one made a guess and the guess proved right, how can one explain one's answer?"

But within a few seconds stepped forward a young man, Sursen. He was a nobleman's son. He lifted the lid of the casket on which was written gold. But the coin he picked up was made of brass. He said,

"This casket marked gold contains brass coins, as is evident. The one marked silver contains gold coins and the one marked brass contains silver coins."

"How do you explain your answer?" asked the minister.

"We know that the brass coins are contained in the casket marked gold. Now remain silver and gold coins. Since we have been told that the mark and the content would not tally, the casket marked silver cannot contain silver coins. It has to contain gold coins. Naturally the remaining casket will contain silver coins!" said Sursen.

Once the solution was given, it seemed extremely simple to all. Each one thought that he too could have passed the test successfully. The princess put the garland around Sursen's neck. Others had to applaud.



The Prince and the WIZARD

(Badal, captured and then released by King Bhuvansingh, meets the wizard and is amazed to find the fellow sporting the king's lost talisman on his chest. The wizard promises the talisman to Badal on condition that Badal would undertake to perform a series of hazardous tasks on his behalf. Badal agrees. At the wizard's asking, he plucks a jewel off a serpent's hood.)

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"Bravo!" shouted the wizard as soon as Badal sprang out of the cave, the glittering jewel in hand.

The soothing blue hue given out by the jewel was extremely fascinating. Badal had a look at it and he handed it over to the wizard.

They began walking again.

The wizard led him through a narrow rocky path with sharp-edged hills on both the sides. A bright moon shone on the eastern sky. Badal realised that it was a full-moon night.

"I do not know if many human beings have entered this region," observed Badal.

"Not many," agreed the





wizard. But he stopped abruptly and said, "I am afraid, the time is not yet ripe for me to laugh. It is not going to be easy for us to possess the other jewels."

They had little talk during the week's journey. They passed their nights in unfamiliar caves and spent the days walking.

Both had come to the end of a blind gorge. Farther passage was blocked by a huge black boulder. The wizard chanted an incantation and planted a kick on the boulder. At once it crumbled down, reduced to a heap of dust.

A tunnel opened up. As they passed through it, Badal could hear unearthly noises. Some of them sounded like lusty laughter, cruel and fearful; some sounded like cries of torment.

However, soon they came out to the open. It was a small valley, encircled by hills shrouded in mist. Here and there stood a few tall trees.

"Do you see that old tree? There is a vulture's nest on its top. Another jewel lies in that, guarded by a fearful vulture. I shall call you truly brave if you can fetch that," said the wizard.

"I can try. The vulture may be sleeping now."

wizard. "But there are always some people, however few, who seek things which ordinary people never dream of. Once in a while one such man would set his foot in this region but whether he would be able to go out or not is a different matter."

"I see. But what is our immediate destination?" asked Badal.

"In a week's time we will be in a valley. There are two more jewels to be won. Once the three jewels are mine, the talisman is yours. For me the prospect of new magic powers, for you the prospect of the throne, ha ha!!" laughed the



"But you cannot do so through climbing the tree. The moment you touch the tree, the vulture would wake up even if it is asleep. It will swoop down upon you and tear you with its dagger-like deadly beak," cautioned the wizard.

"If you give me a bow and arrow..."

The wizard laughed and said, "That won't do. The jewel must be obtained without the vulture being killed just as you managed to get hold of the earlier one without killing the serpent."

Badal walked around the tree surveying the silent region. On one side of the vulture's tree

stood a still taller banian tree with its long shoots hanging down. On the other side was a hillock.

After brooding over his plan for a moment, Badal told about it to the wizard. Both climbed the banian tree and stood on a branch. Badal took hold of a long shoot which was hanging from the top. He bound himself to the shoot by the help of a dry creeper. The shoot was as plastic as a rope. The branch on which the two stood was at the same level of height with the top of the vulture's tree. The vulture's nest could be seen with the huge vulture seated on it. The nest was





over the jewel to the wizard. It was a yellow stone of charming radiance.

They came down while the vulture was giving out piercing cries.

"It cannot see at night. That makes us safe. Now remains only one more trial for you. I shall hail you as the bravest lad only after you have come out of that, successful," said the wizard.

"I am ready for that," responded the Badal.

"Good. It would be wonderful if all the three jewels can be gathered in a single month. But, I must warn you, the last jewel is guarded by a most dangerous spirit. Whoever has gone in search of that jewel has never come out," said the wizard as he led Badal in another direction. It was a fortnight's journey. At last they stood atop a dark hillock. It was a starlit night. The wizard removed a boulder. All Badal could see was a deep dark hole.

"Jump down and try your luck. Remember, it is a red jewel with a star mark at its centre," said the wizard.

The wizard then showed him a rope which lay nearby.

"I shall throw one end of it

radiating a yellowish hue—obviously due to the jewel.

Badal tried the strength of the shoot by pulling it and shaking it. Then, at his asking, the wizard gave him a forceful push. Badal swung past the nest without being able to pick up the jewel. The vulture was awoken from its sleep at the swish of the swing. But before it could know what was happening, Badal, swung back. On the return swing, he snatched the jewel. As soon as the shoot came near the banian tree, the wizard caught it and helped Badal restore his balance.

With a smile, Badal handed



down the moment you call out for me. I shall then drag you out," said the wizard.

Badal jumped down. Next moment he found himself landed in a most unexpected sphere. It was a room marvellously decorated with gold and silver. All was quiet; but at the centre of the room stood a bedstead and on that lay a beautiful damsel, asleep.

"I am at a wrong place," thought Badal. "Where is the fearful spirit guarding the jewel?" he asked himself.

The sleeping damsel's face looked most innocent. "Is she dead?" wondered Badal and he drew closer to her.

Slowly the damsel opened her eyes and looked at Badal, bewildered, and sat up.

"At last!" she sighed.

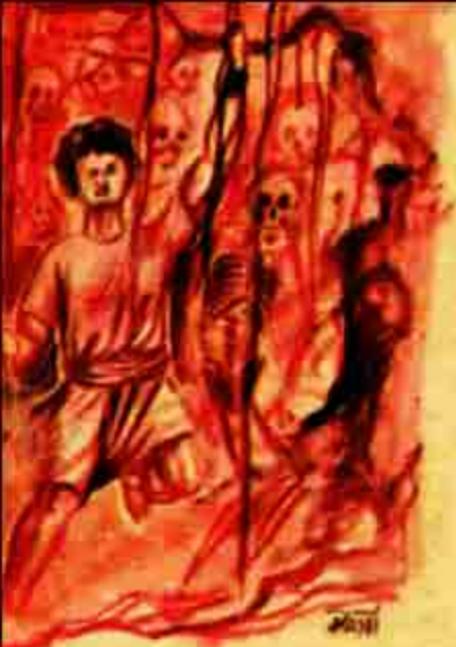
"What do you mean? Who are you?" asked Badal.

The damsel smiled. "Please sit down," she said, showing her bed. Her voice was extremely sweet and resonant. Badal sat down.

"Have you never heard the tales of princesses taken prisoners by giants? I am one such unlucky princess. A giant keeps me lulled here. It is the breath of a human being that woke me up," said the damsel, inching near Badal.

Before Badal had said any-





thing, she whispered, "Please take me with you—out into the world of sunlight!"

"It is my duty to help you, since you are in distress," said Badal.

"But there is a curse on me. I cannot go out with anybody unless he kisses me!" whispered the damsel imploringly and she took Badal's hands into hers.

Badal hesitated.

"Brave young man! Can't you do this much to save me from this giant's den?" she appealed.

Badal was moved to pity.

The damsel pressed her head on his chest. Next moment an unusual hue flashed before Badal's eyes. She observed the red jewel with a star mark hidden in the damsel's lock. Instantly his illusion was broken. He understood who the damsel was.

He stood up and snatched the jewel from her lock and called out for the rope. As the rope came down, he saw the damsel changing into a ghastly witch. The beautiful room changed into a weird place. Dozens of skeletons were dancing around him.

"You would have become one like us had you kissed her! She, the queen of the ghosts, would have got another subject!" sang out the skeletons.

The witch and her army of ghosts were trying to stop Badal from escaping with the rope. They were planting on him blows and bites. But their attack was airy. Nothing harmed him physically.

The wizard pulled the rope and Badal was soon out with the third jewel.

(To be continued)



ADVENTURES OF MINTOO

PLUNDERING THE PLUNDERERS

The forest of Sonbon was the haunt of a gang of dacoos. One evening they fell on a party of pilgrims and took away their money and ornaments. Mintoo and his pet, Jhandoo, observed this from a hiding.



They made a bundle of the loot and carried it into a cave deep inside the forest. Mintoo and Jhandoo followed them and saw their doing.



The dacoos left. Mintoo slowly went near the cave. No, it was not possible for him to enter the cave, for the opening that was there was too small. But, yes, the monkey could do it, of course!



After they deposited their loot, the dacoos raised a heavy slab of stone and thereby blocked the entrance into it, although they hardly expected anybody to steal their stolen goods!





Jhandoo was smart enough to understand Mintoo's wish. He entered the cave through the small opening. He could not carry the whole bundle at a time. But he opened it and carried the items one by one.



Again and again Jhandoo entered the cave and brought out the looted property and deposited them before Mintoo. He at last came out with the cloth with which the bundle had been made.



The sad pilgrims, after spending their night in an inn, were on the way again when it was dawn. "Wait!" they heard someone shouting from behind.



Mintoo caught up with them and handed over the bundle to them. Their joy knew no bound. They would like to reward Mintoo. But he and his pet were off as fast as wind !

Next: A Storm in the Forest.



LEGENDS AND PARABLES OF INDIA

THE UNGRATEFUL KING

King Brahmadutta of Varanasi had a son who was so wicked that he was hated by one and all. He would take hold of innocent passers-by and torture them for fun. He never spoke a kind word to anybody; never showed any respect to the learned or the aged.

One day he was bathing in the river in the company of his pals. Although he did not know swimming, he was attended upon by a number of servants who were expert swimmers.

Suddenly a storm broke forth. It grew dark. The prince looked up at his servants and said, "Come on, carry me into

the midstream. I wish to have a dip there."

The swimmers jumped in and did as ordered. The pals of the prince waited in the shallow water. It was raining heavily. They could not see what was happening in the river even a few yards away.

Now, the servants thought that it was a golden opportunity to do away with the wicked prince. They abandoned him at the midstream and swum back.

"Where is the prince?" asked the prince's pals.

"He slipped off our hands. We thought that he was eager to return home!" answered the





The storm continued and the prince shouted from time to time, "Save me! Save me!!"

When, in the evening, the log floated by a forest, a hermit happened to hear the prince's cry. He was none other than the compassionate Bodhisattva —the soul that was to incarnate as the Buddha in a later birth.

Bodhisattva was strong enough to brave the storm and enter the river and drag the log ashore. He led the prince as well as the other three creatures into his hut. In the warmth of a fire he nursed them and prepared food for them. He saw to it that the serpent, the mouse, and the parrot were fed first. Being weaker creatures, they claimed the greater share of his care. But he never neglected the prince. He fed him well and made him sleep by the fire.

They remained with Bodhisattva for two days. The storm had passed and they had recovered their strength. Preparing to depart, the parrot said, "O my saviour, I used to live in a tree which fell into the river. I could not fly due to the terrible storm. Had you not saved me, I would have perished. I have a number of friends in the Himalayas. If ever you call

servants.

Back in the palace, they told the same story to the king. Immediately the king sent hundreds of soldiers to search for the prince in the river and along the banks. The search continued till late in the night. But the prince was not to be found.

The strong current swept the prince away. Luckily for him, he found a floating log. That saved him from drowning. Three other creatures had already taken shelter on the log. They were a serpent, a mouse and a parrot. They did not mind the prince sharing their shelter.



standing at the foot of the hill on the other side of the forest, I shall come down and if you need, I shall ask my Himalayan friends to bring you some rare corn."

"I shall remember your promise," said Bodhisattva.

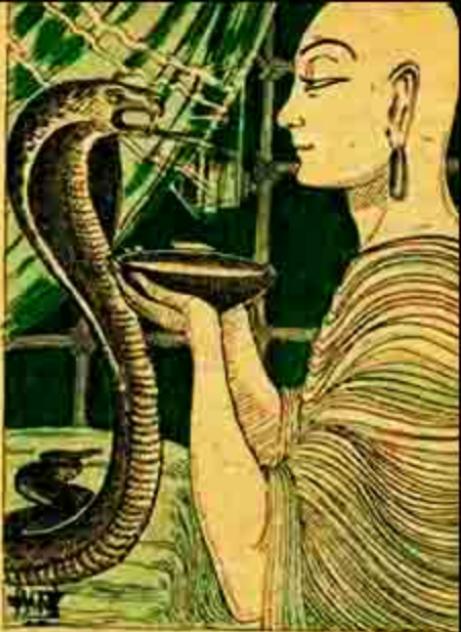
The serpent said, "I was a merchant in my previous life. I kept several crores of gold coins hidden on the river-bank. My attachment to the buried treasure made me take birth as a serpent. I am passing my days guarding it. But I should be happy if you can put my treasure to good use."

The mouse too had a similar tale to tell. Bodhisattva promised to meet them in future.

"I am to succeed my father as the king. If you visit Varanasi, I shall receive you with due honour," said the prince.

Years later Bodhisattva paid a visit to Varanasi. By then King Brahmadutta was dead and the prince has ascended the throne.

The young king was out for a ride, mounting an elephant. As soon as he saw Bodhisattva coming from the opposite direction, he told his bodyguards, "Take hold of that fellow



Bind him to a pillar and whip him hard. Thereafter lead him to the execution ground and behead him! The fellow had the audacity to neglect me and pay attention to a serpent, a mouse, and a bird!"

At once the bodyguards swooped down upon Bodhisattva and began torturing him. A large number of people gathered around the king's victim and asked him, "Had you by any chance ever done a good turn to the king?"

"Indeed, I had," said Bodhisattva and he narrated whatever had happened.

The people of Varanasi

seething in agony under the tyrant's rule. Their patience had come to an end. The king's conduct towards Bodhisattva suddenly inflamed a wild rage in the crowd. They drove away the royal bodyguards and freed Bodhisattva.

The king had not gone far. The crowd rushed upon him and pulled him down from the elephant's back. He was killed.

The people pleaded with Bodhisattva to sit on the throne. Bodhisattva conceded to the request and gave the land a glorious rule. In course of time he visited the forest and met the

serpent and the mouse. They were tired of guarding their treasures. They requested him to take away the treasures. Bodhisattva obliged them and brought them to his palace, along with their wealth. He did not forget the parrot and brought it along too.

The treasures were spent for the welfare of the kingdom. In the top floor of the palace he built a tunnel of gold for the serpent to live in it. For the mouse he got a sapphire cave made and for the parrot a gold cage.

From the Buddha Jatakas



A ROYAL DILEMMA !

Once upon a time there was a foolish king who acted whimsically. Luckily he had a clever minister to counter-balance his actions.

Once the king announced that those who can narrate to him interesting dreams would be rewarded. Hundreds turned up with their dreams. The king asked the minister to lodge the would-be narrators of dreams in the royal guest house, for he could not hear all of them at once.

The disgusted minister made a thousand asses to assemble before the guest house and block the way for the dreamers to come out.

"What is the matter?" asked the king.

"My lord, the asses claim that they can sing fine. If the king had time to listen to hundreds of dreams, he ought to have time for enjoying their music—they insist," explained the minister. The king looked pensive.

"We have no time either for the songs or for the dreams. Let the asses as well as the guests leave us," said the king.



Were The Great Bright

THOSE WONDERFUL MUSICAL PRODIGIES

A dictionary would tell you that *Prodigy* means a person or thing that causes great wonder. In the world of music there have been a number of boys who displayed what they call a precocious genius! Let us meet some of them.

Ludwig Van Beethoven (1770-1827) kept his audience spell-bound when he was 8. His compositions which were publi-



shed when he was barely 10, bore the stamp of high originality. He became deaf at 30, yet he never ceased to strive for perfection.

Johann Hummel (1778-1836) gave concerts in public at 9. Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828) composed some of his best pieces before he was 11.

Frederic Francois Chopin (1810-1849), known as "the Poet of the Piano", played a concerto before a gathering of music lovers at 8.



INTERNATIONAL



In Their Childhood

Richard Strauss (1864-1949) composed at 6. And Samuel Wesley played the organ when he was 3.

The list of musical prodigies includes Felix Mendelssohn, Johannes Brahms and Dvorak.

An advertisement that appeared in a German newspaper in 1763 makes interesting reading:

"The boy, not yet seven, will perform on the harpsichord, play a concerto for violin, and accompany symphonies on the



clavier, the keyboard being covered with a cloth, as easily as if he could see the keys. He will name all notes sounded at a distance, singly or in chords, and improvise on harpsichord and organ as long as desired. Tickets 1 taler."

The boy was none other than Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791), the greatest of them all, who composed masterly minuets before he was 4 and made his first professional tour of Europe at 6.



THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN



Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn discovered some hidden wealth by chance. Widow Douglas took charge of the young Huck who had no mother and whose father was a notorious drunkard.

But the drunkard compelled Huck to come with him to the woods. They lived there in a hut. When drunk, the father behaved cruelly towards the son. At last Huck escaped in a canoe to an island in the river Mississippi.

But the island had given shelter to another man beforehand. He was Jim, a slave who was seeking to escape from his owner.

One day they saw a whole house being carried away by the current. Inside lay a dead man. Jim did not allow Huck to see the man's face, describing it as too ghastly.

Soon they were in the river again, going through a long series of adventures. They were joined by two vagabonds one of whom claimed himself to be the Duke of Bridgewater. The

other one did not lag behind. He was the King of France in hiding! The 'King' and the 'Duke' tried to deceive people as physicians, fortune-tellers, actors and what not.

Once the 'King' posed as the foreign-returned uncle of some girls who had lost their father and was about to swallow their money. But Huck cleverly foiled the move.

Another time they advertised that they would enact a tragedy. All they showed was the naked 'King', with patches of colour all over his body, crouching and hopping for a while. By the time the audience returned with rotten eggs and cabbages, the 'troupe' had escaped.

But the 'King' and 'Duke' proved treacherous. Greedy for a reward, they turned poor Jim in as a slave who had escaped. With the help of his old friend Tom Sawyer, Huck arranged for Jim to escape at night. But there was a shooting and Tom was injured. They took shelter in an island. But Jim refused to escape leaving the wounded

Tom behind. He brought Tom back for treatment and was captured in the process.

But Jim's owner was by then dead. She had declared Jim free in her last will. Huck's drunkard father too was no more. In fact the dead man whom Jim did not allow Huck to see in the floating house was the man.

Huck's wealth was safe. He was to be adopted by one Aunt Sally who proposed to civilize him.

But Huck was already planning to escape again!

Huckleberry Finn, published in 1884 as a sequel to *Tom Sawyer*, is Mark Twain's masterpiece.



HOW THE GRAY BEARD TURNED BLACK

Once in a while we meet people who have strange stories to tell. A young merchant, upon travelling to a distant port, saw a Moor whose features appeared familiar to him.

"Why are you gazing at me?" asked the Moor, kindly.

"I had visited this port many years ago, in the company of my father. Then I was a boy. But I remember having met a Moor who was my father's friend. He was old and he

must have departed to the other world. But you resemble him. I wonder if you are his son or grandson," remarked the young merchant.

The Moor smiled and instead of replying to the merchant directly, invited him to his own house.

When the merchant came to the Moor's house, he was warmly received. The Moor showed the guest many rare things which he had collected



in the course of his several trips to faraway lands, particularly to Cathay.

Among the objects shown by the Moor was a quill as big as the sail of a ship.

The young merchant marvelling at it and wished to know what it was.

"Young man, I was keen to draw your attention to this prize possession of mine. Have you heard about the roc bird?" asked the Moor.

"Indeed, I have. They are huge birds who live in the rocky islands of the ocean," said the young man.

"It is so. This quill is from the tender wing of a young roc," informed the Moor and he narrated the following incident:

Once the Moor and his party of mariners came ashore an unknown island. No man seems to have ever set his foot on that land which was made up of hills and jungles.

As the mariners climbed a hill to cast a look at the surrounding, they saw something like a round boulder resting on a rock. It was marble-white and it glistened in the sunshine.

"It is a roc's egg!" exclaimed the most experienced man in



the party. All were excited. They looked around. No roc was to be found.

"Let us break it and carry the flesh of its chic," proposed one of them. At once they brought down their axes on the egg. The shell gave away. The huge roc chick emerged. The mariners killed it in a prompt operation and carried a basketful of its meat into their ship. The Moor dragged a feather along with him.

They set sail hurriedly before it was evening. The wind was favourable and soon they left the island miles behind.

It was dawn when noticed something like a dark

cloud fast approaching their ship.

"Save us, O God, this is a roc—perhaps the mother of the egg we destroyed!" cried out those of the mariners who knew the giant bird.

In a minute the terrible bird was right overhead. It was noticed that it carried in its claws a large boulder. It circled over the ship menacingly and then dropped the boulder. The mariners shut their eyes. Luckily for them, the boulder fell not on the ship but near it, making a fearful splash.

The roc screamed and flew back towards the island. The

mariners thanked Providence for protecting them from its wrath. They now cooked the meat and feasted over it.

It was in the morning the next day that they found out what the meat had done to them. The gray beards of the aged ones looked black. They had grown young!

"Young man, it was not my father or my grandfather who was your father's friend, but myself. I remember having seen you with your father. You could not recognise me because I had partaken of the roc's meat," the Moor revealed to the amazed merchant.



ASWAGHOSHA

Nineteen hundred years ago, the city of Peshawar was known as Purushapur. It was the capital of a mighty king whose dominion spread from the basins of the Indus and the Ganges to Kashmir and a part of Afghanistan—then known as Gandhara. He is famous in history as Kaniska of the Kushan dynasty.

A minister of King Kaniska was on his way to the city, through a mountain pass. It was evening. From some nearby cave came a human voice, reciting some verses. So sweet was the recitation that the minister pulled the reign of his horse and stopped. So did his escorts.

A long time passed. He asked his escorts who could be the person whose voice he heard.

"He is Aswaghosha, a sage and a composer," replied one.

The minister thought of congratulating the sage. But, on second thought, he decided not to disturb the sage's serene mood. He chose to gallop

away.

But something unusual was noticed: the horses won't move! Upon a closer scrutiny was found that they were even shedding tears! Such was the effect of Aswaghosha's recitation.

Maybe, it was this minister who ultimately led the sage to Kaniska's court. Maybe, this is just a story. However, it shows what people of the sage's



own time thought of him.

Aswaghosha was a great Buddhist philosopher. At the same time he was a poet, a singer and a playwright.

Among the famous works of Aswaghosha is the *Buddha-charita*, a narration of the first phase of Buddha's life, an invaluable source-book for historians.

In another of his work, *Sariputaprakarana*, he narrates how the Buddha won the hearts of the two seekers, Sariputta and Moudgallayan. There the arguments upholding the Buddhist principles are presented in a highly lucid style. Upon a friend pointing out that the

Buddha's teachings ought not to appeal to a scholarly Brahmin since they originate from a non-Brahmin source, Sariputta replies, "The right medicine would heal the sick even when given by a man of lower caste. Does water fail to quench the thirst of a heat-oppressed person when given by a man of lower caste?"

Aswaghosha played a leading role in a great Buddhist conference convened by Kaniska. He also toured the country with a troupe of singers, popularising the Buddhist canon. His missionary zeal as well as his works went a long way in spreading Buddhism.





THE LUCKY PRINCE

The king and the queen had died, leaving behind them an infant son. The nurse felt that the child's life was not safe in the castle. She escaped into the forest carrying the infant whose name was Chandrasas.

The late king's minister ruled the land. If he could not crown himself as the king, it was because there was a wide-spread rumour that the infant prince is alive. One day when Chandrasas was playing in the street, the royal astrologer drew the king's attention to him.



From the marks on the boy's face, the astrologer was sure that he was the prince. The minister immediately assigned the task of secretly murdering the boy to his executioners. But the executioners were bewitched by the child's innocent smile and spared him.





A nobleman brought up Chandras. Spies reported to the minister that the prince was alive. The minister invited him to the court and made him his emissary. Chandras served him faithfully.

The minister's son was the governor over a region. The minister sent Chandras to him with a letter. The letter bore the instruction to put Chandras to death. Reaching the outskirts of the governor's town, Chandras felt tired and slept in a garden.



It so happened that the minister's young daughter, Visaya, who was then residing with her brother, the governor, paid a visit to the garden. Charmed by the sleeping youth, she felt curious to see the letter he carried. She was horrified at reading it.



Determined to save the young man, Visaya changed the text of the letter which now meant that the governor should give Visaya in marriage with Chandrahas. The instruction was carried out as soon as Chandrahas met the governor.



Soon thereafter the minister reached the spot and was taken aback at seeing what had happened. Even though Chandrahas had become his son-in-law, he grew anxious to put an end to him.

He asked Chandrahas to proceed to a certain temple at midnight. That would ensure him great prosperity, he confided to him, for that was an auspicious hour. The minister's son, the governor, heard it secretly.





At midnight Chandras was about to start for the temple, but was stopped by Visaya who suspected foul play. Eager to gain prosperity, the minister's son entered the temple and was killed by assassins appointed by the minister to kill Chandras.

The minister reached the spot and was aghast to see his son lying dead. He repented and grew mad. His shock was so great to allow him to live much longer.



After the minister's death, Chandras ascended the throne that rightfully belonged to him. He lived long and became a great King—says the Mahabharata.



WONDER IN THE WELL

Mangal was an excellent swimmer and diver. He would plunge into the river at one spot and emerge at another spot far away. The king, pleased with his feat, had presented him with the figure of a mermaid made of brass.

One day the headman of the village chanced to see the figure. He took a fancy for it and desired to decorate his own sitting-room with it.

"Will you please sell it to me?" he asked Mangal. I am expecting some important guests. They would feel impressed at seeing this."

"Oh no. This is a gift from the king. As such, it is far more valuable to me than its actual value. However, since you like it so much, you can keep it for a week and return it to me after your guests de-

part," said Mangal.

As soon as he got the statue, he commissioned a sculptor to build an earthen replica of it. The sculptor executed the work well. It was coloured to look like one made of brass.

When Mangal came to take back his property, he was given the earthen figure. It was only when he was back at home and he placed the figure on his table that he found out the deception, from the nature of the sound it made.

He rushed to the headman's house and demanded the original figure.

"Mangal, how can you think that I might have changed your brass into earth? Of course, I had got it cleansed in the water of the village well. If, because of some unknown element in the water, the brass changed

into earth, that is a different matter," said the headman.

Mangal quietly went back.

A month later, while drawing water, the headman's wife dropped her large brass vessel in the well. It was a deep well and Mangal alone could dive and recover things lost in it.

The headman, after much hesitation, requested Mangal to try recover his lost vessel.

"I shall try in the morning," said Mangal. At night he made a dive and recovered the brass vessel and sunk an earthen vessel. He carried the brass vessel home.

In the morning the headman called on him and requested him to do the needful. He went down and came up with the earthen vessel.

"Mangal, this one must be someone else's. Mine, as you

know, is of brass. Please try again."

Mangal went down again, but climbing up, said, "No, sir, there is no other pot under the water. Surely, your brass vessel has changed into the earthen one. After all, you know well the wonder the water of this well can work."

Mangal left for his home. The headman made three or four other men dive into the well. That was the only well in the village and the villagers got annoyed with the headman for muddling the water.

The headman passed the day in remorse. He had never known such defeat in life.

At night he met Mangal at the latter's house and quietly returned the brass figure. Mangal too quietly returned the brass vessel.





A Crisis in Identity

Mohan, Susheela's husband, never took up any work after his marriage. He resided in his father-in-law's house and spent his time sleeping, pacing to and fro in the courtyard and eating.

Susheela, however, was extraordinarily smart and active. In the village everybody loved her for her helpful nature. She nurtured a number of healthy cows and supplied fresh good milk to several houses in the village. If there was a feast or a ceremony in someone's house, it was Susheela who was called to take charge of the situation. She managed things very well.

She looked after her old parents well and did not mind her husband living as a depen-

dant.

One afternoon, while rolling lazily on his bed, Mohan heard somebody asking a woman of the neighbourhood, "Do you know where Mohan lives? I come from his village."

"There is nobody as Mohan in this area," replied the woman.

Mohan came out hurriedly and met his friend.

"Here is our Mohan. How did you say that no Mohan lived here?" the visitor challenged the woman.

"But he is our Susheela's husband. How did I know that you looked for him?" replied the woman.

"Mohan! It is a shame that you should be known only by





"your wife," observed Mohan's friend, after the woman had left.

Mohan sharply reacted to the comment. He decided to let himself be known to all by his own name.

Early in the morning the next day, before Susheela was ready, he carried a potful of milk for distribution in the houses of two nearby customers.

"Here is milk for you," he shouted before the first customer's house. The lady of the house dismissed him impatiently, saying, "We receive our milk from Susheela. Go away!"

"I think this fellow is none

other than our Susheela's husband," observed the master of the house.

But Mohan was already angry at the gentleman referring to him as Susheela's husband. He left their compound in a huff.

He took a decision to serve the local landlord. He met the landlord and greeted him.

"This is our Susheela's husband," cried out the landlord's daughter who had a great liking for Susheela.

Mohan's face paled. He turned away immediately. Next, he decided to borrow some capital from the money-lender and start a business. When he kept his proposal before the money-lender, the latter said, "I appreciate your ambition. But how can I give you a loan unless you pledge some property against it? The case would have been different if I had known you..."

"Sir, this fellow is our Susheela's husband. You may give him a loan. We can deduct our due in instalments from the monthly bill we pay to Susheela for her supply of milk," suggested the money-lender's clerk.

But Mohan, as soon as he heard the phrase, "Susheela



husband", had begun walking away.

Disgusted with life, he left Susheela's house without telling her anything. He donned the clothes of a mendicant and roamed about for six months. When he returned to Susheela's village, he had grown a big beard. Nobody recognised him.

"Here is a mendicant. Give him food," a villager told his wife.

Mohan was happy at the fact that he was no more referred to as "Susheela's husband." After having food at the villager's house, he relaxed on the bank of the village pond.

Towards the sunset Susheela came to the pond for water. As soon as her eyes fell on Mohan, Mohan tried to hide his face.

Susheela approached him and said, "Do you think you can

hide yourself from me behind a beard? I wonder what made you leave me. I never neglected you. You too had never shown any ascetic tendency. Will you please tell me frankly what the matter was?"

Mohan confessed that it was his agony at the villagers knowing him only by her name that turned him a mendicant!

Susheela kept quiet for a moment and then said, "Listen. I have no objection to be known as Mohan's wife. But that won't be possible here. Now that my parents are no more, I am ready to proceed to your village. Let us begin our life newly there. In everything you must take the initiative. You must always remain active. Nobody would then address you as Susheela's husband!"

Mohan agreed to the proposal.



MOTIVE BEHIND A GIFT!

A wealthy aristocrat suddenly became bankrupt. He vested whatever immovable property he had—lands, houses etc.—in the hands of a few gentlemen and requested them to try liquidate his loans.

One day a fellow met the gentlemen and said, "I had presented a gift worth fifteen rupees to the aristocrat's daughter on the occasion of her marriage. I thought the aristocrat would give me a costlier gift on the occasion of my daughter's marriage. But now that he is bankrupt, I do not expect him to fulfil my hope. Let me at least get back my fifteen rupees."

"How many members of your family had partaken of the feast the aristocrat had thrown on that occasion?" asked one of the gentlemen.

"Four," replied the fellow.

"Each dish cost five rupees at the minimum. Our friend spent twenty rupees on you. You have got your fifteen rupees. Now let us get the surplus five rupees immediately," said the gentleman.





THE THREE DANGERS

Dark and fearful was the night. There were frequent showers accompanied by thunder. Flashes of lightning showed ghastly faces. The sound of the jackals howling was mingled with some weird laughter.

But King Vikram did not swerve. He climbed the tree and brought down the corpse. But as soon as he began crossing the cremation ground with the corpse lying astride on his shoulder, he heard the vampire that possessed the corpse saying, "O King, I hail your courage. But I doubt if courage can change one's destiny. Let me explain my point through the example of Subroto."

The vampire went on: Prince Subroto was the heir to the throne of the King of Ujjain. Subroto's horoscope showed that there could be danger



his life from a crocodile or a snake or a dog.

The queen was no more and the king was extremely indulgent towards the infant prince. He took precautions to forestall any possible danger to the child's life. He built a small castle on a rock that stood forming a small island at the centre of a lake. The lake was free from crocodiles and snakes. Only a small bridge connected the castle with the land. The bridge was guarded by soldiers so that no dog could approach it.

All precautions were taken to ensure that the castle remained

protected. Guards galloped around the lake at regular intervals. Every week the lake was thoroughly searched for snakes. By chance a snake was found, it was instantly killed.

The prince grew up to be a smart young boy. One day, while pacing on his balcony, he saw a lovely puppy playing on a rock beyond the lake. He cried to have the puppy and refused to touch food until his demand was fulfilled.

His nurses did everything possible to forget all about the puppy and to have food. But their efforts yielded no fruit.

The incident was duly reported to the king. He consented to the prince having the puppy.

The prince and the puppy became excellent playmates. Days passed. The prince grew up to be a clever young man, though still confined to the castle.

At times people collected on the lakeside and tried to steal glimpses of their prince. One day the prince heard with attention what they were talking. The same day he sent a message to his father, saying that he would like to go out on a



journey.

The king waited for a day and then sent his consent to the prince's proposal. The prince chose a strong horse and galloped away, followed by his faithful dog.

After a few days he entered the boundary of the neighbouring kingdom. The king of that land was a highly whimsical man. He had a charming daughter. The king had made a beautiful palace for her. A high wall made of rough stones circled it. He had announced that the prince who could scale the wall would marry the princess.

A number of princes had collected in the royal guest house. When Prince Subroto alighted from his horse before the guest house, he too was taken as a participant in the contest. But he did not disclose that he was the Prince of Ujjain.

In the evening, from the attendants of the guest house he came to know everything about the princess and the condition for marrying her. He decided to watch the situation.

Next day, the princes tried to scale the wall. It was a difficult task and all of them gave up midway up the wall.



Subroto observed them in their efforts. They were all looking below and that made them nervous. At last he began climbing. He never looked below and fixed his eyes on the princess who stood on the balcony.

All the participants broke into applause when they saw Subroto successful in his effort. The king who was immediately informed of his achievement, desired to know who Subroto was. Even then, instead of declaring himself as the Prince of Ujjain, Subroto said that he was a commoner.

The annoyed king announced



that a commoner could not marry his daughter. The message was conveyed to Subroto while he was still with the princess standing on her balcony. Subroto was willing to bow out. But the princess shouted at the messenger who stood on the ground saying that unless her father agreed to her marriage with the commoner, she would jump to death!

The whimsical king knew how adamant her daughter could be. He had no other go than to consent to their marriage.

The marriage was duly performed. The prince confided

to his wife who he really was and how he expected danger from crocodiles, snakes and dogs.

"Why do you have a dog with yourself then?" asked the princess.

"I took it for my pet when I knew nothing about the prophecy by the astrologers," explained the prince.

A few months passed. One day the prince heard that his father, the king of Ujjain, was sick. He set out for his home with his wife, escorted by bodyguards.

At night he camped in the riverside guest house of a land-



lord. His bodyguards were dozing. Luckily, one of them woke up on time to see a crocodile crawling into the prince's bedroom. He threw his spear at the creature and cried out. Other bodyguards came running. The crocodile was killed.

They were in another guest house the next night. The princess did not go to sleep and sat guarding her husband. Suddenly she detected a snake sliding into their room. At once she placed a cupful of milk before it. It stopped advancing and began lapping the milk. It was not difficult for the princess to find a sword and cut the snake down.

Next day they resumed their journey towards Ujjain. While going through a forest, the dog's eyes fell on a wild duck inside a bush on the riverbank. It jumped at the duck with so much gusto that the prince got a jolt and he slipped into the river. His legs were caught in a patch of quicksand. He would have been sucked into death had not the princess thrown the edge of her saree into the water.

The prince caught hold of the saree and came ashore, pulled by the princess.



They were soon at Ujjain, to the great satisfaction of the dying king. The astrologers who read the prince's horoscope declared that the period during which the prince could expect danger from a crocodile, a snake, or a dog, was over.

The vampire paused and challenged King Vikram, "O King, I have a few doubts which you may resolve if you can. Why did the King of Ujjain allow the prince to keep a dog knowing well that it could cause him danger? How did he allow the prince to undertake a journey when he had decided to keep him under protection in

the lake castle? Why did the princess keep awake on the second night of her journey towards Ujjain? Remember, O King, if you choose to keep mum despite your knowledge of the answers, your head would roll off your shoulders."

At once answered King Vikram, "The King of Ujjain wished to protect his son's life. If a dog could be a danger to the boy's life, his refusal to take food could also prove a danger to his life. Hence the king allowed him to have the pet so that he ate as usual.

"The prince asked for permission to travel after he heard what the people were talking. The people must have said how unfortunate their would-be-king was to remain a prisoner. The king, through his spies, must

have known that the people knew about the dangers to their prince's life and they pitied him. The people must have wondered—how can a prince who was afraid of animals could protect them from any invader. It was necessary for the prince to move about freely, realised the king. That would dispel the doubts of the people. Besides, now that the prince had grown up, he ought to be able to protect himself.

"The princess did not sleep on the second night of their journey because, from the crocodile's attack, she presumed that now the fate was in motion. She proved right."

As soon as the king concluded his answer, the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.



THE RIGHT TIME

Veerpal was the ruler over a small territory in the kingdom of Avanti. He paid tributary tax to Suvarnasen, the king of Avanti.

Once Veerpal rebelled against his king. Suvarnasen ordered his general to prepare the army for an expedition against Veerpal.

"My lord, this being the rainy season, is not the right time for a military expedition," said the general.

"Any time is right time for war," said the king.

Next day, the king was surprised to see the prince making some servants water a mango tree.

"Why watering the tree in the rainy season?" asked the king.

"I want the fruits quickly," replied the prince.

"Are you mad? How can the fruits grow before the right time?" asked the king.

"Since any time was right time for a war, I thought any time could be also the right time for mangoes to grow!" replied the prince.

The king withdrew his order.



THE TRICK THAT CLICKED

The President of the Animal Welfare Board sent notice after notice to the members to attend meetings of the board. But the notices went unheeded. No meeting could take place unless at least one-third of the members were present.

Once he fixed a meeting and let a rumour spread that the king himself would preside over the session. All the members turned up. But as soon as they learnt that the king was not coming, they looked at the door, desiring to sneak out!

"One of you have not paid the coachman of a hired vehicle. Whoever has been unkind to the poor fellow should go out and pay up his dues," announced the president.

All kept sitting till the president declared the meeting over.





THE SAGA OF SHIVA

We go back to the beginning of things. The Supreme Lord, in His free will, decided to launch the creation. He manifested as three great Godheads for executing his scheme. As Brahma, He was to create innumerable things and beings. As Vishnu He was to sustain them. But the creation was not to be static. That is to say, things and beings which were created were not to remain the same forever. Divinity remained hidden in the entire creation. Everything must go on changing, until the hidden Divinity is discovered.

For this the old had to be destroyed from time to time, paving the path for the new to emerge. Those powers of the Supreme Lord which were to set this process of destruction

in motion manifested as Lord Shiva.

But once they manifested as three Gods, they had to know each other a new. Out of a lotus that had sprung from Vishnu's navel emerged Brahma. For long did he remain engrossed in meditation on himself. Then he saw a luminous object in the shape of a huge egg floating before him on the waters of space. Coming from the egg was a wonderful sound: *Aum*. This was the beginning of all the creation. Brahma, attracted by the sound, wished to go to its source and he entered the object.

Inside was the primeval darkness. Brahma left his original form and took a new form. Thus began the process of birth. And when Brahma, born anew,



wished to come out of the object, it broke into two, the lower part forming the earth and the upper part forming the celestial sphere.

Upon the earth that was marked by land and water, Brahma created seven human beings: Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana, Sanatkumar, Sona, Sanatsujata and Kapila. But these great souls were not willing to participate in the creation. They remained aloof, lost in meditation upon the Supreme Lord.

Brahma wept when he saw those sons born out of his mind unwilling to participate in the

scheme of creation.

From the pool of Brahma's tears sprang up Shiva. Brahma looked at him, wonder-struck. But Vishnu appeared between them and explained to Brahma the significance of Shiva.

The three great Gods chose to dwell at three different places. Satyaloka became the place of Brahma, Vaikuntha the place of Vishnu, and Kailash the place of Shiva.

At Satyaloka Brahma created a few more beings for assisting him in his work. They were called Prajapatis. Among them was Daksha. With the help of the Prajapatis, the process of creation gathered momentum. Human beings inhabited the earth; kingdoms were established.

Daksha had a number of daughters. One of them was Sati, the Divine Power incarnated in a human form. Sati decided to marry Shiva. The marriage was performed at the instance of the gods. She went to live with Shiva on Mount Kailash.

Shiva's dwelling on Kailash was guarded by faithful beings known as the Rudras. Famous among them were Nandishwar and Kalabhairav.

Daksha, who had got Sati as his daughter only after praying to the Divine Mother, quite forgot who Sati was. He was not happy with her choice of her husband. The way Shiva and Sati lived—without any pomp and show—as ascetics, was not to his liking.

Daksha commanded a great influence over the sages and the gods. Once he was invited to a Yajna. As soon as he reached there, the assembly of gods stood up as a mark of respect for him. But one who seemed to sit forgetful of everything was Shiva.

Daksha was a proud king. He took Shiva's conduct as an insult to him. Although the gods requested him to keep quiet, Daksha could not contain his anger. He began heaping abuses on Shiva.

Shiva hardly cared. But his attendant, Nandi, got furious and told Daksha, "For your audacious conduct towards Shiva, you deserve to lose your head!"

Daksha left the place in a huff. But Shiva remained there till the rite ended. Thereafter he left with his attendants for Kailash.

Days passed. Daksha arran-



ged to perform a great Yajna. His messengers ran in all the directions inviting sages and gods. But he took the decision not to invite Shiva.

Huge camps were set up to accommodate guests. Kankhol, the capital of Daksha, became festive. By and by illustrious sages like Kashyap, Agastya, Atri, Bhrigu, Mareechi, Narada and Parasara arrived there. Apart from the gods, the Yakshas, the Maruts, the nymphs and the Gundharvas too came. Of course, many came because they had no courage to disregard an invitation from the mighty Daksha.



At last came Brahma and Vishnu. The *Yajna* began. Mareechi, Bhrigu, Dadhichi and others who were devotees of Shiva wondered how such a *Yajna* can be deemed complete without Shiva's presence.

"Have you not invited Shiva?" they made bold to ask Daksha.

"No, I haven't!" replied Daksha arrogantly. "I do not desire the presence of one who does not dress decently, who lives in the company of spirits and who is discourteous."

"It is awfully wrong of you to utter such words about Shiva. He is all compassionate, all for-

giving. By nature he is above the ordinary norms of behaviour. And know this that your rite would never become complete without his participation," warned Dadhichi.

But Dakshā did not relent. The devotees of Shiva left the place in disgust.

"Only fools have departed. Let us not bother over them. We begin our rite," announced Daksha.

From Mount Kailash Sati saw a number of flying chariots coming to the earth. She grew inquisitive about them. Her maids gathered the intelligence that the chariots were carrying the gods to her father's place.

Sati approached Shiva and expressed a desire to visit her father's house.

"It won't be proper to go uninvited," said Shiva.

"Must I wait for a formal invitation from my father? A daughter's access to her parents is unconditional. I am sure, my father will be delighted to see me. At my pleading he would also change his attitude towards you," said Sati.

Shiva's efforts at dissuading her yielded no result. Shiva then asked his attendants to escort her to Kankhol.

Upon reaching Daksha's palace, Sati saw that all her sisters and their husbands had arrived long before her, duly invited. She did not understand how her father could have forgotten her. However, her mother was overjoyed to see her and she whispered to her, "Don't get upset with your father's attitude. His mind, I am afraid, is not functioning properly."

Soon Daksha saw Sati. At once he burst into a rage and blurted out many a nasty word against Shiva.

"O father, chide me as much as you like, but don't abuse him. I can't bear a single word that vilifies him," murmured Sati.

But her protest fell on deaf ears. Daksha continued in his fury. Little did he appreciate the anguish of his daughter.

Sati meant what she said. She could not bear for long Daksha's shrieks against Shiva. She fell down dead!

Instantly Sati's escorts ran to pass on the tragic news to their master. They were followed by Narada and a few other rishis.

Shiva stood thunderstruck for a moment. Then he roared out his anger and plucked a lock from his head and threw it on the ground.

At once sprang up two mighty beings—Bhadrakali and Virbhadra. After them rose a host of beings—*ganas*.

Virbhadra who had a thousand hands and a body that seemed to be made of sunbeams, drove a chariot drawn by lions. Bhadrakali rode a lion and led the *ganas*. They thundered and marched towards Daksha's palace.





A Happy Conspiracy

It is doubtful if there was another miser in the world like Madangopal, the landlord of Shripur. In fact, stinginess had become a disease with him. He considered only tight-fisted people clever.

People laughed at him behind his back. But he did not care. He had no doubt in his mind about his own wisdom. It is said that ignorance is bliss. He never cared to know if he could be wrong in his attitude to life. In a way he was happy !

The one to be pained most for his stinginess was his only child, Gauri, a smart and sweet girl. The landlord had decided to make Gauri's husband his

heir. But he wanted to be sure that the one who would marry Gauri was as 'careful' in matters of money as himself. He was not prepared to see his hard-earned property passing on to an irresponsible hand.

He opened his mind to a Brahmin who was a successful match-maker. Over a year the Brahmin led a number of young men, who were notorious for stinginess, into the landlord's house. But the landlord hardly showed any interest in them.

Disgusted, the Brahmin stopped presenting prospective bridegrooms to the landlord.

Gauri alone knew why her father was not impressed by the suitors. She observed that he

father kept a vessel filled with water at the entrance of their house. He would mark the way the suitors would use the water. Generally, the suitors, in order to impress the landlord with their sense of cleanliness, used a lot of water to wash their feet. But such conduct of theirs produced the opposite result. The landlord concluded that those who wasted the water carelessly would not mind spending his wealth like water!

After a long interval the Brahmin sent word about his bringing yet another young man. At the appointed time the landlord came out to receive the

guests. He marked that while the Brahmin stopped and washed his feet using a liberal quantity of water, the suitor came and greeted him straightway. He held his pair of slippers in hand and had wrapped his feet with old papers.

After they took seats, the young man said, "Please don't mind my coming in without washing my feet. If I am chosen to marry your daughter, I understand that I must live in your house. In that case I have to go out of the house and come in a number of times everyday. Would it be proper for me to waste a potful of



water every time?"

The landlord looked agape at the young man. His face recorded deep joy. Then he asked, "But why don't you use your slippers?"

"You don't suppose that I bought the slippers only to use them up! I carry them about so that people don't think that I am stingy," explained the young man.

The landlord was thrilled. But he decided to examine the young man even further, just for the joy of it.

"Well, don't you think that those old papers you are using for protecting your feet have some value too?" he asked.

"But they don't go waste. Later they are used as fuel in my household," replied the young man.

The landlord jumped up and

hugged the suitor. He arranged for his daughter's marriage with the young man on the earliest auspicious day.

To his friends and relatives, the landlord used to tell, "My son-in-law is nonpareil in wisdom!"

The son-in-law slowly took over the management of the landlord's estate and began spending generously. But by then the landlord had become old and sick. He hardly knew what his heir was doing.

One thing which the landlord did not know was, the young man was the choice of his own daughter. She had taught him how he should conduct himself before her father. The Brahmin, of course, was an accomplice in this happy conspiracy!

So, all went well !



THE NEED—FALSE AND TRUE

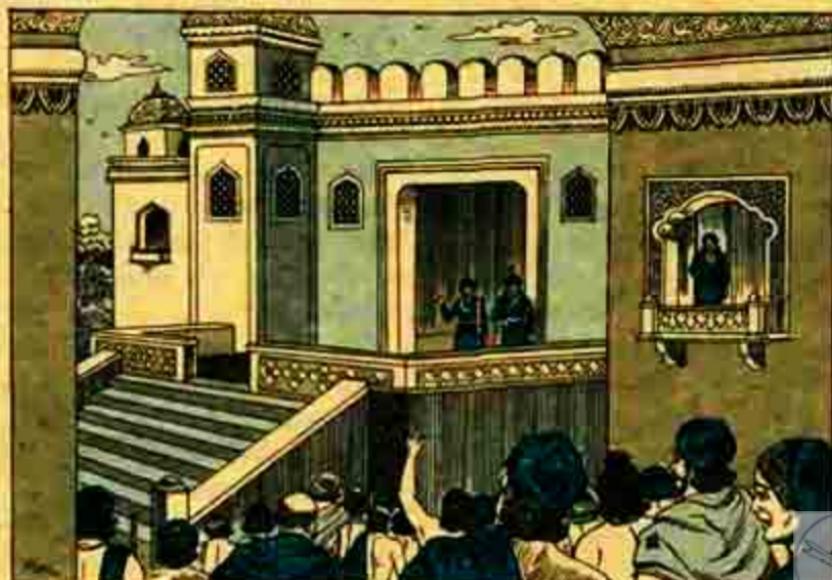
The King of Vijaypuri decided that no man should remain homeless in his kingdom.

Announcements were made to the effect that all those who had no houses of their own should gather before the palace on a certain day. They would be provided with houses.

Thousands gathered on the appointed day. The king looked distressed, for with all his resources he could not have built houses for so many.

But the minister announced, "Let all those who are in need of houses climb the hill. They must cut out slabs for the construction of their houses. Each one would be required to work only according to his capacity."

In a few minutes the crowd dispersed. Only a handful of people were seen heading towards the hill. The king realised that they were the ones really in need of houses.





DECEIVED BY TIME

After their marriage, Tara came to live with her husband, Sivram. A month later Tara's younger brother came to take her to their house.

"Please pay a visit to our house after a fortnight so that my sister can come back with you," said the boy.

After a fortnight Sivram reported at his father-in-law's house. He was received with great warmth. Tara's brothers conducted themselves like his humble servants, vying with each other to serve him. He felt highly flattered.

"When do we return?" he asked Tara. His mother-in-law heard him. She said, "What is there to be in a hurry, sonny? Is this not your own home? Why not stay here for a few days?"

"How long do you wish me

to stay?" Sivram asked. He was most happy to be there, but there was work at home.

"Say, ten days!" replied the mother-in-law.

Sivram decided to spend ten days there and tried to forget of his work at home.

He realised that if there was heaven anywhere, it was at one's father-in-law's. One was not asked to work. One commanded the attention of all. One was not required to bother about food, yet one got choice dishes.

Days passed. "When do we return?" Tara asked Sivram at intervals.

Sivram yawned and smiled and then closed his eyes.

One day, after his lunch, Sivram found no water to wash.

"Where is water?" he asked

Tara's younger brother.



"There!" replied the boy, pointing at the well.

Sivram did not mind drawing water from the well himself. After all, his mother-in-law had asked him to look upon the house as his own! Thereafter he always drew water from the well himself whenever necessary.

"Why not pay a visit to our field?" one day the father-in-law proposed.

Sivram had no objection to accompany him to the field where Tara's elder brother was busy weighing the yield.

"I wonder if you know how to handle the balance scales," the brother-in-law said jocularly.

"Of course I know!" asserted

Sivram.

"Let us see you do it!" proposed the young man, handing over the balance scales to Sivram. As Sivram began weighing the rice, the father-in-law and the brother-in-law went away to attend to some other work.

At noon Sivram loaded the cart with the rice-bags and drove it to his father-in-law's court-yard.

"Why did you bring the bags here? They are to be sent to the town for sale," said the father-in-law. Tara's elder brother whispered to Sivram, "Brother, this is your home. I need not feel shy to request you



to drive the cart to the town. Here is the merchant's address. All you have to do is transfer the bags to his godown. I have some important work to do here."

Sivram was obliged to follow the instruction. He returned late in the afternoon the next day, hungry and tired. He dreamed of a bath with hot water and a few hours of sleep. But, to his utter dismay, he found the house locked.

"They have gone out to enjoy a festival; should be back any moment," informed the neighbour.

Sivram sprawled on the veranda. The family returned at the dawn. They had brought with them their elder son-in-law.

The house being opened, Sivram entered the kitchen and heated a potful of water him-

self. But he had just poured the hot water into a bucket when Tara's younger brother snatched it, saying, "The elder brother-in-law needs this. You can heat your water again!"

Sivram entered Tara's room, fuming, and burst out, "Is it only the elder son-in-law who deserves courtesy, and not I?"

"He comes for a day or two. He does not make this house his lasting abode!" replied the sad Tara.

"But I continue to stay because your mother desired me to be here for ten days!" said Sivram.

"Ten days!" Tara laughed. "You have been here for a full month!"

Sivram realised that he had forgotten time. He got ready to return home with Tara in an hour.



SARNATH

Buddha preached his first sermon in the Deer Park at Sarnath near Varanasi. It was here that he revealed the eight-fold path to enlightenment.

Here, a magnificent pillar built by Asoka was surmounted by the famous "lion-capital", which is now the national emblem of India.

The great Dhamek Stupa of Sarnath, with its eight projecting bays, is a highly impressive monument.



THE ROBBER AND THE KING

Diomedes was a pirate who became a terror to the voyagers during the time of Alexander. He commanded a ferocious gang.

However, he was captured at last and produced before Alexander.

"How dare you plunder people in the sea?" Alexander demanded of the pirate.

"How dare you plunder people on the land?" challenged the pirate. "I command a single boat and harass some people. That is why I am called a robber. You command a large army and invade lands and oppress innumerable people. You must be called a King!" he commented.

Alexander had no answer. He not only released Diomedes but also made him a wealthy nobleman.



PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



Mr. P. V. Subramanyam



Mr. S. G. Deshpande

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail to Photo Caption Contest, Chandramama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs. 25/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

The prize for the December '78 contest goes to :

Mrs. R. F. Rebello, No. E-71, S. B. I. Colony,
Kakinada - 533 003.

The Winning entry : 'Lonely Musing'—'Lovely Cruising'



PICKS FROM
OUR MAIL BAG

Dear Sir,

In your article on Tansen, you have referred to a Muslim saint once as a *fakir*. Is not *fakir*, which means 'beggar', a derogatory term to be used for a saint.

—A Reader

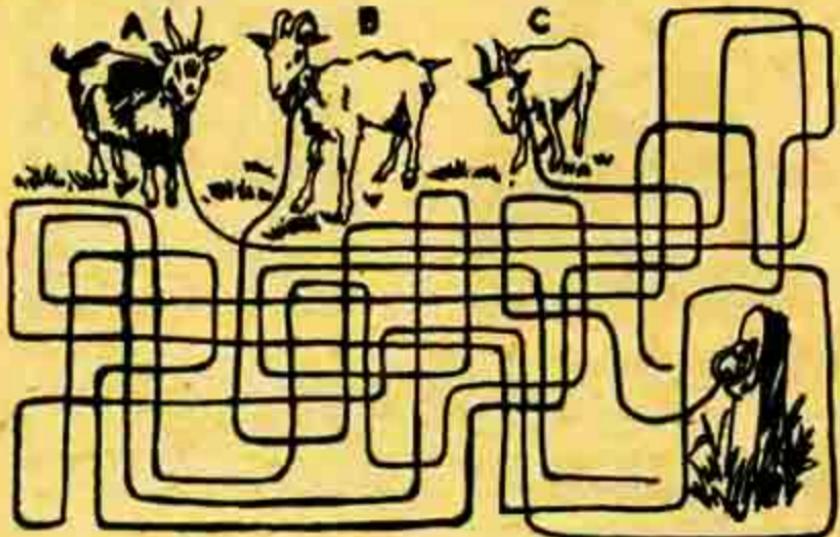
Far from it, the *fakir* as the *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary* explains, means "religious (esp. Mohammedan) mendicant, ascetic, or wonder-worker in India."

Even if *fakir* literally means a poor man (often used in contrast to *pir*), in both Hindu and Muslim traditions there was nothing wrong in a holy man being extremely poor or a beggar. Certain traditions even require a holy man to live only by begging.



PUZZLE TIME

One of these three goats is tied to the post.
See if you can spot which one, before tracing
down each line.



SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES



Miss Rina Bose, aged 5 years insisted on a bank for a birthday present.



In Andhra Bank's Kiddy Bank, Bose senior found
the gift that brought
banking within his little
daughter's grasp.

Ofcourse, the multiple facets of banking are beyond Rina's years. But she saw one of her friends with Kiddy Bank doll. And dropping money into it too. That's when Rina made up her mind to own a bank - Kiddy Bank. And save a tidy little sum for herself. Rina is only one of the lakhs of children who found that saving can be fun with Andhra Bank's Kiddy Bank.

With nearly 35 years of banking experience and over 600 branches spread all over the country, Andhra Bank has worked out other schemes too. Like Kalpatharu, Bhagya-lakshmi, Samraksha, Samkshama, Janashaya, Karshakasahayya, Grubkalpa and Social Security Scheme for women. As well as advances to industries and priority sector including weaker sections. Each thoughtfully planned to suit your exact needs.



The
**Andhra
Bank Ltd.**

Regd. & Central Office :
Sultan Bazar, Hyderabad-5

Chairman : G. SWAMINATHAN

Andhra Bank -
the bank responsive to people's needs.



POPPINS PAPER PLEASURE

Here are Ram & Shyam
to teach you a few tricks—
things to do with paper
for fun and kicks.



Steps to make:

Draw 2 diagonal lines from corner to corner across the square cardboard paper. Make cuts from each corner towards the centre—be sure cuts are half the length of one side of square.

Fold each corner into the centre, press nail or pin through the centre of the paper, catching in all the corners.



Windmill Wonder

You will need: square of thin cardboard; scissors; a nail or pin; hammer; button; bamboo cane; pencil; ruler.



Thread button on at the back, bang nail to bamboo cane. Leave good room for windmill to turn. Have fun!



PARLE

POPPINS

Fruity Fun

Lickable... Likeable... Lovable

5 Fruity flavours:
Orange, Lemon,
Lime, Pineapple, Raspberry

